

**LAURA CUMMINGS
STAFF ATTORNEY
CONNECTICUT BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
BEFORE THE
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
FEBRUARY 15th, 2013**

Good Morning Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Laura Cummings and I am testifying today on behalf of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. CBIA's 10,000 member companies represent the broad diversity of Connecticut's businesses, and the vast majority of our members are small companies with fewer than 50 employees.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today in **support of HB 6358 AN ACT UNLEASHING INNOVATION IN CONNECTICUT SCHOOLS.**

HB 6358, in part, requires the State Department of Education to administer a teaching profession initiative pilot program in an effort to attract, develop and retain high quality teachers and administrators.

We know from research that teachers and principals are the most important school-based factors for driving student achievement. Excellent teachers transform children's lives. Every Connecticut student deserves to be taught by an effective educator. The first step in building a corps of strong teachers begins with improving the quality of the state's teacher preparation programs.

For the aforementioned reasons, CBIA urges the committee to **support HB6358.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you regarding this important issue.